

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5819

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 0067

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, UY

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS TRAINING, CUSTOMS

FOR SHANKLE, SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR NARCOTICS, ARA

REF: STATE 242255

1. CANDIDATES FOR NARCOTICS CONTROL COURSE OFFERED IN REFTEL WILL BE NOMINATED BY JANUARY 11. WHILE DISCUSSING COURSE WITH CAPTAIN TAGLE, DIRECTOR OF URUGUAYAN CUSTOMS, DKDE EXPLAINED THAT HE IS SENDING ONE OF HIS TWO KEY PEOPLE TO COURSE BEING OFFERED IN MARCH AND THAT HE HAD URGENT NEED OF TRAINING FOR HIS OTHER KEY MAN, CDR. CARLOS COSTA, INSPECTOR GENERAL OF CUSTOMS SERVICES. MARCH COURSE LOOKED MOST ATTRACTIVE TO TAGLE BUT HE SAID HE COULD NOT LET BOTH HIS BEST MEN LEAVE TOGETHER AND THAT COSTA NEEDED SOMETHING WITH A DIFFERENT EMPHASIS.

2. COSTA'S ROLE INCLUDES ADMINISTRATION OF ALL ASPECTS OF ENFORCEMENT. HE AND TAGLE CLAIM TO HAVE DIRE NEED FOR GUIDANCE IN SETTING UP OPERATION WHICH EXPANDING FROM HALF DOZEN TO 30 MEN. EMPHASIS WOULD BE ON MANAGEMENT INCLUDING OFFICE PROCEDURES, ORGANIZATION AND SUCH THINGS AS OPTIMUM COMMUNICATIONS AND PHOTO NEEDS.

3. CDR. COSTA IS A HARD-LINE MILITARY ACTIVIST WHO DISTRUSTS
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POLICE. HE CLAIMS TO HAVE INFO ON DRUG TRAFFICKING WHICH HE

WILL NOT PASS TO POLICE AND WE HAVE SOME CONCERN THAT HE MIGHT MOVE PRECIPITOUSLY, THUS JEOPARDIZING NARCOTICS BRIGADE OPERATIONS, ALBEIT WITH THE BEST OF MOTIVATIONS. DEA HERE WORKS PRIMARILY WITH POLICE NARCOTICS BRIGADE AND SAUCEDO, WE BELIEVE, HAS HAD MINIMAL CONTACT WITH COSTA. WE CONVINCED THAT OFFERING ASSISTANCE TO CUSTOMS THROUGH OTHER CHANNEL NOW WOULD BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO OVERALL DRUG EFFORT. IT SHOULD IMPROVE INTERDICTION CAPACITY, PROVIDE A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF INTELLIGENCE ON TRAFFICKING, AND, PERHAPS, CONVINCE COSTA OF NEED TO DEVELOP INFORMATION BEFORE JUMPING IN WITH BOTH FEET AGAINST SUSPECTED TRAFFICKERS. WE MIGHT ALSO GET ACROSS A BETTER CONCEPT OF NEED FOR CUSTOMS/POLICE COOPERATION IN INTERESTS OF BOTH.

4. WE HAVE NOT DISCUSSED POSSIBILITY OF COURSE BEYOND THAT OUTLINED ABOVE, NOR ARE WE CERTAIN WHETHER COSTA COULD ATTEND. NAVY CINC GONZALEZ HAS BEEN OPPOSED TO TRIPS ABROAD AND TAGLE AND COSTA, BOTH NAVAL OFFICERS, LOOK TO THE CINC AS MUCH AS TO THEIR CIVILIAN SUPERIORS. BOTH SAY THEY WOULD NEED OUR HELP IN GETTING CINC APPROVAL.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: BEFORE PROCEEDING TO FEEL OUT CINC AND LOOK INTO COSTA'S PRECISE NEEDS, WE WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING WHETHER SOMETHING ALONG THESE LINES WOULD BE POSSIBLE AND WHETHER FUNDING WOULD BE AVAILABLE.

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